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Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

Note verbale dated 3 May 2005 from the Permanent Mission of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

The Permanent Mission of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and, with reference to the note of 9 December 2004 concerning the national report, has the honour, on behalf of the Lao Government, to transmit herewith the national report of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 3 May 2005 from the Permanent Mission of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

[Original: English]

National report of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

The Lao People's Democratic Republic supports Security Council Resolution 1540 which is in line with our policy of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction especially nuclear, chemical and biological.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is a land-locked and least developed country. It has no capability nor intention to produce, use or possess, transport, transfer or deliver nuclear, chemical or biological weapons to any state or non-state actor. Nevertheless, attaching importance to the issue of non-proliferation and disarmament, the Lao Government has undertaken a number of legal preventive measures in meeting the objectives of Security Council Resolution 1540. These measures are as follows:

1. Legal framework

1. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is in a process of amending its Penal Law which will cover crime of terrorist acts involving the use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Currently the drafting committee is collecting comments and inputs from concerned Ministries and agencies in order to make the amended draft more comprehensive before submitting to the National Assembly for consideration and adoption.

2. Prime Minister's Decree No. 205/PM dated 11 October 2001 On Export-Import Control, which stipulates that any exported and imported goods require an authorization and all relevant documents certifying the origin of the goods and their quality. The decree also contains provisions relating to the punishment of violator.

3. Regulation of the Minister of Commerce No. 106/MOC.FTD dated 25 January 2002 on the authorization by Ministry of Commerce for import and export of controlled goods.. The regulation identifies relevant agencies which have the right to issue an authorization and documents required for submission.

4. Notification of the Minister of Commerce No. 0284/MOC.FTD, dated 17 March 2004 on the list of prohibited imported and exported goods. Explosive substances, ammunitions and chemicals, which can be used for explosive purposes and weapons are prohibited.

5. Notification of the Office of Prime Minister No. 1691/PM dated 7 October 2004 on procedures concerning imported and exported authorization and transportation of goods across the country. The Notification sets out the required authorization documents which should be presented to custom officers for goods clearance.

2. Legal enforcement.

Concerned Government Agencies are mandated to monitor and control the import and export of prohibited goods in particular, weapons, equipments and chemicals that can be used to produce weapons. The following Agencies are:

1. Ministry of Commerce is responsible for general inspection and issuance of license for prohibited imported and exported goods.

2. Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts is responsible for screening and approving the types of chemical substance and manufacturing machineries prescribed in the Business License prior to the issuance of import license by the Ministry of Commerce.

3. Department of Food and Pharmaceutical, Ministry of Health, is responsible for inspection of imported chemical precursors.

4. Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction is responsible for monitoring domestic and transit transport of goods, especially the prohibited and hazardous ones.

5. Custom officers at border checkpoints are responsible for verifying the quantity, types and origin of imported and exported goods prescribed in the license issued by relevant authorities.

6. Department of International Police, Ministry of Public Security has the duty to share information with Interpol on terrorist acts and transnational organized crimes.

7. X-ray scanners have been installed at major international airports to ensure public security and prevent illegal trafficking of weapons and prohibited goods.

3. **International Cooperation**.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is party to a number of international conventions related to the prohibition and non proliferation of weapon of mass destruction such as:

1. Non-Proliferation Treaty of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), ratified on 5 March 1970.

2. Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), ratified on 25 April 1973.

3. South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ), ratified on 24 June 1996.

4. Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), ratified on 25 February 1997.

5. Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), ratified on 5 October 2000.

6. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Agreement for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, ratified on 29 March 2001.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has bilateral cooperation with its neighbouring countries on the issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and signed the Agreement of inland transit goods with Vietnam and Thailand. The agreement prohibits the transit of toxic chemicals and radioactive substance through the territories of the contracting parties concerned unless stated otherwise.

Besides, with a view to raising public awareness of the issue on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Trade and Industry of Japan, has jointly organized a seminar on export control on 7 February 2005 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

4. **Conclusion**

The Lao PDR consistently expresses its support for the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. It maintains that the existence of weapons of mass destruction constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security, especially in the context of increasing threats of terrorism.

In line with this policy, the Lao PDR supports Resolution 1540 and calls for international cooperation on the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, it is of the view that Resolution 1540 should be carried out in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law and based on the respect for the principle of national independence and sovereignty, non-interference in other country's internal affairs and peaceful settlement of all disputes. Besides, the implementation of this Resolution should not hamper the import, export and technology transfer for peaceful purposes.